

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Sheffield Hallam University
Programme name	Diploma of Higher Education Operating Department Practice
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC register	Operating Department Practitioner
Date of visit	2 - 4 December 2008

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Executive summary

The Health Professions Council (HPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. The HPC is a health regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. The HPC currently regulates 13 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Operating Department Practitioner' must be registered with us. The HPC keep a register of health professionals who meet our standards for their training, professional skills, behaviour and health.

The visitors' report which follows outlines the recommended outcome made by the visitors on the ongoing approval of the programme. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 11 June 2009. At the Committee meeting on 11 June 2009, the ongoing approval of the programme was re-confirmed. This means that the education provider has met the condition(s) outlined in this report and that the programme meets our standards of education and training (SETs) and ensures that those who complete it meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register. The programme is now granted open ended approval, subject to satisfactory monitoring.

Introduction

The HPC visited the programme at the education provider to consider major changes proposed to the programme. The major change affected the following standards - curriculum standards and assessment standards. The programme was already approved by the HPC and this visit assessed whether the programme continued to meet the standards of education and training (SETs) and continued to ensure that those who complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

This visit was part of a joint event. The education provider reviewed the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered the following programmes – Diploma of Higher Education Paramedic Practice, BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography, BSc (Hons) Radiotherapy and Oncology, BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy and BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy. The education provider, the professional bodies and the HPC formed a joint panel, with an independent chair and secretary, supplied by the education provider. Whilst the joint panel participated in collaborative scrutiny of all the programmes and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HPC's recommendations on this programme only. Separate reports exist for the other programmes. As an independent regulatory body, the HPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HPC's standards. Separate reports, produced by the education provider and the professional body, outline their decisions on the programmes' status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Penny Joyce (Operating Department Practitioner) James Petter (Paramedic)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Osama Ammar
Proposed student numbers	62
Initial approval	28 May 2002
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2009
Chair	Roger New (Sheffield Hallam University)
Secretary	Laraine Cookson (Sheffield Hallam University)
Members of the joint panel	Mick Harper (College of Operating Department Practice) Mike McManus (Internal Panel Member) Ranald Macdonald (Internal Panel Member) Jenny Shelton (Internal Panel Member)

Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HPC reviewed the documentation detailed below, sent by the education provider:

	Yes	No	N/A
Programme specification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Descriptions of the modules	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice placement handbook	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student handbook	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
External examiners' reports from the last two years	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advertising materials	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HPC did not review a practice placement handbook prior to the visit as the education provider did not submit it. However, they did table it at the visit itself.

During the visit the HPC saw the following groups or facilities:

	Yes	No	N/A
Senior managers of the education provider with responsibility for resources for the programme	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Placements providers and educators/mentors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialist teaching accommodation (e.g. specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for ongoing approval, the visitors must be assured that the programme meets all of the standards of education and training (SETs) and that those who complete the programme meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

The visitors agreed to recommend to the Education and Training Committee that a number of conditions are set on the programme, all of which must be met before the ongoing approval of the programme is reconfirmed.

The visitors agreed that 57 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 6 SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for ongoing approval. Conditions are set when certain standards of education and training have not been met or there is insufficient evidence of the standard being met.

The visitors have also made a recommendation for the programme.

Recommendations are observations on the programme or education provider which do not need to be met before the programme is recommended for ongoing approval. Recommendations are normally set to encourage further enhancements to the programme and are normally set when it is felt that the particular standard of education and training has been met at, or just above the threshold level.

The visitors did not make any commendations on the programme. Commendations are observations of innovative best practice by a programme or education provider.

Conditions

2.1 The admission procedures must give both the applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to make or take up the offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must revisit all the submitted programme documentation and any other documents to ensure that the terminology in use is reflective of the current landscape of statutory regulation.

Reason: In the submitted documentation, there were instances of out-of-date terminology in reference to the registered status of individuals such as “licence to practice”, “state registered”. There are also occasions when the relationship between completion of the programme and registration is unclear owing to the implication that registration is automatic upon completion. The visitors considered the terminology could be misleading to applicants and students and therefore require the documentation to be thoroughly reviewed to remove any instance of incorrect or out of date terminology.

3.4 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

Condition: The education provider must provide detailed information on the number and role of associate or visiting lecturers and on the appointment and quality assurance mechanisms in place for this type of employee.

Reason: The programme documentation made reference to the role of associate or visiting lecturers on the programme, but in discussion with the programme team it became clear that some information was missing from the programme documentation. In order to ensure that the number of experienced and qualified individuals contributing the programme is appropriate the visitors require information on those currently involved with the programme and on the mechanisms used to appoint and manage the quality this type of employee.

3.5 Subject areas must be taught by staff with relevant expertise and knowledge.

Condition: The education provider must provide detailed information on the number and role of associate or visiting lecturers and on the appointment and quality assurance mechanisms in place for this type of employee.

Reason: The programme documentation made reference to the role of associate or visiting lecturers on the programme, but in discussion with the programme team it became clear that some information was missing from the programme documentation. In order to ensure that the programme is taught by staff with relevant expertise and knowledge the visitors require information on those currently involved with the programme and on the mechanisms used to appoint and manage the quality this type of employee.

3.9 Where students participate as patients or clients in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols must be used to obtain their consent.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the protocols used to obtain consent to ensure that there is a coherent mechanism appropriate to all situations requiring consent and that there are clearly articulated opt-out pathways.

Reason: The education provider submitted two consent forms for scrutiny. One form did not contain an opt-out clause and the other was very specific to one particular instance requiring consent. The visitors considered that a more coherent protocol was required that ensured all situations requiring consent were stipulated for and that the pathway for opt-out was clear to the students.

4.7 Where there is inter-professional learning, the profession-specific skills and knowledge of each professional group must be adequately addressed.

Condition: The education provider must provide the final validated versions of the new inter-professional education modules and these should not indicate that they are separately approved by HPC.

Reason: The revalidation event arose from changes to the common inter-professional education modules that feature in all undergraduate health and social care programmes offered by the Faculty of Health and Wellbeing. The education provider was required to take into account the views of not only the HPC and relevant professional bodies, but also those of the Nursing and Midwifery Council and General Social Care Council. As a result of this, the revalidation is a multi-staged event taking place across two weeks. In order for the visitors to be confident that they have reviewed the programmes in their complete form, the visitors will require oversight of the final version of the module descriptors after all bodies have applied their requirements to them.

Additionally, the modules indicated that HPC would be separately approving the inter-professional education programme. These modules contribute to a portion of the courses being validated and do not in themselves lead to eligibility for applying for registration with HPC. The visitors stated, therefore, that this reference must be removed.

6.7.5 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner from the relevant part of the HPC Register unless other arrangements are agreed.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the policy it has in place for external examiner appointments and amend it to reflect that the requirements of the regulator will be followed.

Reason: The education provider wide *Nomination for an initial appointment of a subject external examiner for a taught course programme* form indicated that external examiner appointments will be made taking into account the requirements of “professional bodies”. As the HPC is not a professional body, but a statutory regulatory body, the visitors were unable to see how the specific requirements of this standard are articulated in the documentation. Therefore the visitors felt the documentation required updating to reflect the requirements of the regulator as well as those of other professional, statutory or regulatory bodies (PSRBs).

Recommendations

6.5 There must be effective mechanisms in place to assure appropriate standards in the assessment.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider accelerating plans to moderate practice assessment across all the professions through the office of the Placement Learning Director.

Reason: In discussion with the programme team it was apparent that plans existed to develop the process of moderation for all practice assessments. The intention is to moderate all assessment conducted in placement through the office of the Placement Learning Director to ensure that marks are appropriate to descriptions of the assessed proficiency. The visitors recognised how this practice would improve the consistency of the placement assessment process and wished to support the ongoing work with this recommendation.

Penny Joyce
James Petter